

Gentlemen.

During the year 1897 there were 184 Deaths (112 male & 72 female) which gives a Death rate of 15.5 per 1000 per annum.

In the same period there were 277 births (150 male & 127 female) giving a birth rate of 23.7 per 1000 per annum.

The 7 principal Symptotic diseases were fatal in 37 Cases Scarlet fever 1 Diphtheria 4 measles 8. Whooping Cough 12 Diarrhoea 12. The Symptotic rate is therefore 3.1 per 1000

In the following table the rates for the past 5 years are compared.

	1893.	1894	1895.	1896	1897.
Death rate	13.3.	13.4	13.9	11.7	15.5
Symptotic rate	.4	1.6	.6	.95	3.1
Birth rate.	23.	26.3.	22.5.	23.5.	23.7

82 Cases of Infectious disease were reported, 53 Scarlet fever 17 Diphtheria & Croup. 5 Typhoid fever. & 7 Erysipelas. During no quarter of the year have we been entirely free from cases of Scarlet fever. In the March Quarter there were 3 Cases. In the June 14, In the Sep. 28, Dec 7 with very few exceptions they were mild in type less than 2% being fatal. Of the 53 Cases, 18 were removed to the Monroall Fever Hospital and the rest were treated in their own homes. The majority of the cases occurred in the months of June & July as part of a sudden outbreak which was traced to one of the Public Schools and which led your authority to recommend its closure, an examination of the children attending this School discovered 3 cases in the peeling stage. These were promptly isolated and the school closed and disinfected.

Measles. We have had to deal with 2 outbreaks of measles one during March Quarter, wide spread, involving nearly all the public schools, and involving them to such an extent as to make it practically impossible to carry out their work. Four schools, Sale Lodge, St Anns, the Township and St Josephs, were accordingly closed. The second which were, no doubt, part of the first, though the connecting links







were not apparent, first showed itself in one of the Private Schools, on the recommendation of your authority this too was closed.

Diphtheria. 17 Cases were reported with 4 deaths. In none one case was there anything like a clear connection between the Disease and Defective Sanitation. The Case in question occurred in a house at the back of which a very offensive drain had been opened. The sufferer, a child had passed close to this drain a few days before it began with a very malignant attack. I was subsequently informed that one of the men employed in opening the drain had been ill with Typhoid Fever.

Typhoid Fever. Of the 5 Cases reported, one came to the District with the Disease already developed a second appeared to be due to direct infection and the rest occurred without ascertainable cause.

Whooping Cough. The fact that 12 children died from the complications of this Disease seems to point to its wide prevalence. It is remarkable that of the 37 fatal Cases of Symptomatic Disease, 32 were due to Whooping Cough, Measles and Diarrhoea: i.e. to diseases which with proper care in the great majority of cases end in recovery. Doubtless most of these fatal cases occurred amongst the poor and many might have been prevented by a little knowledge and prudence.

Work done. The year has been an eventful one and one of unusual activity; In dealing with infectious diseases we have found a most valuable resource in Mousall Hospital. There can be no doubt that the prompt removal of infected cases whenever removal was sanctioned enabled us to limit the spread both of Scarlet fever and Diphtheria. The prejudice against Hospitals which used to handicap us in dealing with infectious Disease in the past has almost entirely







disappeared, so that it is now only necessary to have one within easy reach to make it possible for us to utilize this means to the utmost

The following is a list of nuisances examined and reported upon during the year

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| (1.) Pantries etc kept in a dirty state or in unsuitable places. | 4  |
| (2.) Entries yards streets imperfectly paved                     | 14 |
| (3.) Damp Houses.  | 3. |
| (4.) Defective and Blocked Drains                                | 19 |
| (5.) Privies too near houses or imperfect in Construction        | 13 |
| (6.) Stables in unsuitable position                              | 2  |
| (7.) Workrooms improperly ventilated                             | 1  |

There were in addition regular visits paid by your inspector to Lodging Houses, Dances, Slaughter Houses &c

In the month of July at the request of the Nuisance Committee, the whole of the small property in Chapel Road was examined and made the subject of a special report, which is still I believe under the consideration of the Council

We have had complaints, though not so many as in former years of nuisance arising from the street sewer ventilators, I have no hesitation in saying that we yet need to pay more and more regular attention to the state of our sewers

(Signed) J Sheelton Withers  
Medical Officer of Health



